Serial No.:   09/456,670

AMENDMENTS IN THE CLAIMS:

1.   (Currently Amended)   An image forming apparatus for forming an image based on image data inputted from an arbitrary image output apparatus, the image forming apparatus performing:

a judging process of judging whether identification information which identifies the image output apparatus which outputted the image data has been inputted together with the image data, and

an image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data only when the identification information has been inputted together with the image data,

wherein the judging process is performed to judge whether the identification information is included as part of the inputted image data.

2-4.   (Canceled)

5.   (Currently Amended)   An image forming apparatus for forming an image based on image data inputted from an arbitrary image output apparatus, the image forming apparatus performing:

a judging process of judging whether identification information which identifies the image output apparatus which outputted the image data has been inputted together with the image data, and

an image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data only when the identification information has been inputted together with the image data,

wherein the image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data on a portion of which image data of an identification pattern representing the identification information is superimposed, and

~~The image forming apparatus of claim 4, wherein~~ when the identification information which identifies the image output apparatus is inputted as a piece of data

3

Serial No.:   09/456,670

which is different from the image data and an attachment thereto, an image of an identification pattern representing the identification information is created and the created image is superimposed on a portion of the image formed based on the inputted image data.

6.   (Currently Amended)   An image forming apparatus for forming an image based on image data inputted from an arbitrary image output apparatus, the image forming apparatus performing:

a judging process of judging whether identification information which identifies the image output apparatus which outputted the image data has been inputted together with the image data, and

an image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data only when the identification information has been inputted together with the image data,

wherein the image formation process is performed to form an image based on the image data on a portion of which image data of an identification pattern representing the identification information is superimposed, and

~~The image forming apparatus of claim 4, wherein~~ a further process is performed in which an image of an identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image forming apparatus itself is created and the created image is superimposed on a portion of the image formed based on the inputted image data.

7.   (Canceled)

8.   (New) The image forming apparatus of claim 6, wherein the identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image forming apparatus is formed at positions not overlapping with the identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image output apparatus.

4

Serial No.:   09/456,670

9.   (New) The image forming apparatus of claim 5, wherein the identification pattern is formed near an edge of the image.

10.   (New) The image forming apparatus of claim 6, wherein a pattern image indicating an input/output status of the image data is included between the identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image output apparatus and the identification pattern representing identification information which identifies the image forming apparatus.

5